Tabletop fountain

Slate and cedar are paired to create this tabletop fountain

By Paul Lewis

Photo by Roger Yip

Judging from the vast array of tacky water fountains I've seen, it would seem that adding a $20 pump to a plastic rock and throwing rumours of therapeutic value into the mix somehow increases their value ten-fold. So with an eye to designing a tasteful and inexpensive water fountain I was off to the workshop to come up with this version.

Instructions

Wood and water don't mix

The foundation of this project, on which all dimensions are based, is a plastic tray that contains the water. Making wood hold water is difficult. It's easier to use a plastic container, and conceal it using stone-much like a pond liner.

The plastic container listed was purchased at a local garden centre, but if you can't find this particular item, substitute another container of similar proportions and adjust the other part sizes to suit.

Work from the bottom up

Cedar fence boards are the raw material for the bottom box and top frame members. Rip these to width now, then crosscut to length. Assemble the bottom box with biscuit-reinforced butt joints and polyurethane glue. The mitred top frame is assembled with just glue initially. Once the glue has cured, plunge a couple of slots across the joints and insert glue-coated biscuits into the back of each mitred corner. Once they're dry, cut and sand the protruding biscuits flush. Brush on a few coats of Circa 1850's Tung 'n Teak Oil to protect the wood from moisture.

Tools and Materials

Part	Material	Size (T x W x L*)	Qty.
Bottom sides		5/8" x 3 1/2" x 16"	2
Bottom ends		5/8" x 3 1/2" x 17 1/4"	2
Top frame members		5/8" x 4" x 20"	4
Fluted dowels		1/4" dia. x 1 1/2"	4
Slate box			
Top		3/16" x 6" x 6"	1
Long sides		3/16" x 6" x 6"	1
Short sides		3/16" x 3 3/4" x 5 5/8"	1
Plastic reservoir	Grosfillex part #1557	3 1/4" x 15 5/8" x 15 5/8"	
Pump	Beckett part #7061010	60 gph	
Vinyl hose		1/2" outside diameter x 6" (cut to fit)	
River stones			more than a handful

* Length indicates grain direction

Plan

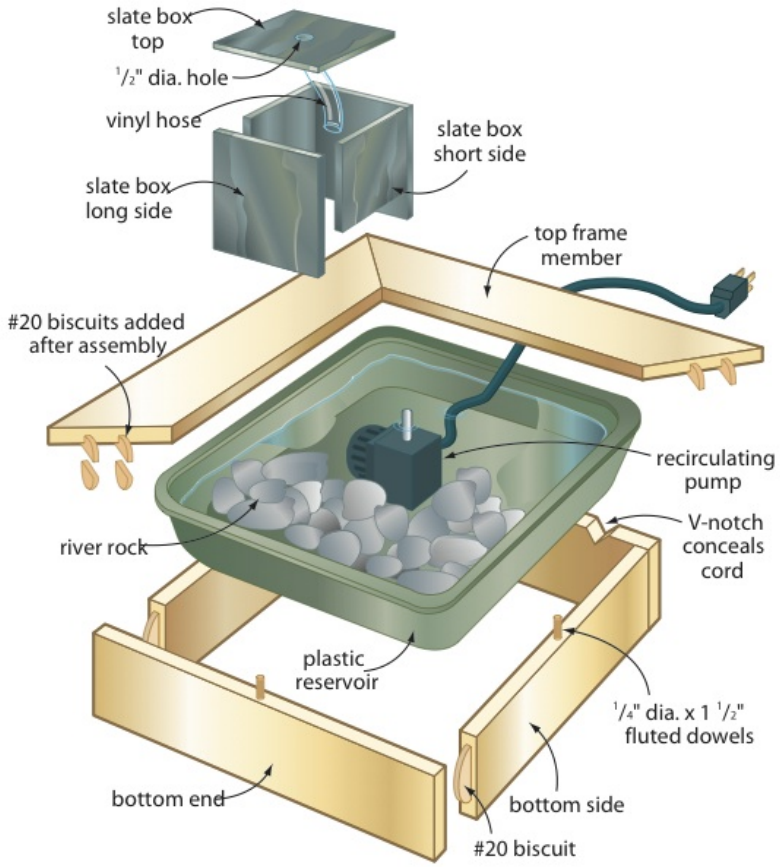

Illustration by Len Churchill